May 22, 1974

Dear Don,

I hardly know where to start to say some things to you that have b-en growing in my heart and on my mind during the past year. So please forgive me for putting them down on paper rather than saying them in person. At least I'll be a bit more organized this way and we'll not be interupted by business, crisis calls, or the sky falling.

One of the greatest joys that I have experienced since my involvement in this tiger-by-the-tail thing that we call the "gay movement", has been my association with you. Your incredible capacity to give of yourself, to re-group and launch anew, has been a constant source of inspiration to me, and indeed, has been a major factor in helping me maintain my own will to go on.

Our "Fabulous Forties Film Festival" provided another opportunity for me to observe your great ability to conceive, direct, organize, plan, design, and execute the finest benefit that we (as a Center) have ever done. Superb efforts by you are so commonplace that perhaps even I have come to expect them. However, when you stepped out on the stage Sunday night and started to sing, I thought to myself, "My God! He not only worked his guts out on this thing, now he's singing his heart out!" I was so touched that I nearly cried. I'm sure that I would have if the act hadn't been so funny.

I was feeling kinda alone afterwards (as I usually do in the wake of a benefit) and you sensed that and expressed your concern. That meant a lot to me even though I probably didn't show it. Also your parting words to me as I dropped you off in front of your house, couldn't have surprised or pleased me more. I was very deeply touched and still am. Even as I write this my eyes are wet. It was just what I needed right at that moment. You came through as usual. And as usual, I was incapable of letting you know how much you really mean to me. This letter is an attempt to express a lot of those silent feelings.

As far as the film benefit goes, success can not always be measured in terms of dollars and cents. Life is full of irony. We were more glorious in "defeat" than we ever were in the "success" of "Carnival" which netted us $2400.00 a year ago.

I love you, Don Johnson, I really really do. And no matter what the coming months bring that will not change.

Jess